

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-32 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicant amends claims 2, 4, 7, 17, 18, 23, 24 and 30 and add claim 32.

*Claim rejections 35 U.S.C. § 103*

Claims 2, 3-4, 13, 17, 19, 21-23, 26-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Onda et al. (U.S Patent No. 6,746,333, hereinafter “Onda”) in view of Stamper et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,820,265, hereinafter “Stamper”) and further in view of Tajiri et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,482,092, hereinafter “Tajiri”). Claims 4-12, 14-16, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Onda, in view of Stamper, in further view of Lee, US Patent No. 6,475, 089). Applicant traverses the rejection at least for the following reasons.

Claim 2

Claim 2 recites, *inter alia*, “wherein the mastery status information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device”

In page 3, paragraph 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner states “Onda teaches the feature of providing, accumulating and storing mastery information to the player individually with the use of unique password strings such as an IP address (See column 7, line 66 – column 8, line 4).

Applicant submits that a feature of providing, accumulating and storing *mastery information* to the player individually does not disclose distributing mastery information according to the mastery **status** information accumulated and stored in the distribution device.

Particularly in column 7, line 66 - column 8, line 4, Onda merely discloses that the access-specific data 142 corresponds to verification data such as password or a location data such as an IP address and does not disclose the unique feature of claim 2 noted above.

Further in page 3, paragraph 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Onda teaches the concept of distributing the mastery information according to a predetermined condition received from the terminal, wherein the predetermined conditions could be mastery status information such as consecutive wins a combat game or stage level cleared/finished by a player (column 6, lines 59-64). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Applicant submits that Onda does not disclose that the distribution device 200 obtaining the predetermined conditions (alleged mastery status information) from the game machine 100 (alleged terminal apparatus) and accumulating and storing the predetermined conditions (alleged mastery status information). Instead Onda teaches that the game player plays the game at the game machine 100 and gets access-specific data (i.e. passwords) to access predetermined associated data (alleged mastery information) if the player satisfies predetermined game conditions. The player inputs this access-specific data (password) to access the game data distribution device 200 from a computer terminal 400 (column 5, line 50 – column 6, line 5).

In view of the above, Applicant submits that Onda does not disclose the unique features of claim 2 noted-above, the unique feature of the claim where it states that the mastery status information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device, and the mastery status information indicates for a player individually on the basis of information for such player concerning a stage to which a player has proceeded.”

Furthermore, in response to the Applicant's arguments in the previous Amendment, the Examiner brings forth the Tajiri reference as part of the examination. The Examiner asserts that helping data are stored and retrieved using a player's identification that is specifically disclosed as "player's ID" and that the helping data assigned to such ID is specifically assigned to the player who owns the ID (Abstract and claim 1). Applicant traverses the rejection based on Tajiri at least for the following reasons.

Tajiri

Tajiri is directed to a game system in which two image-display game devices are structured such that data exchange between the game devices is possible. Tajiri discloses a gift processing routine in which one player (player A) receives ID data from other player (player B) and based on the ID data of player B a mysterious gift (helping item) is generated by the processor of the game device of player A (column 22, lines 2-10) using the received ID data from player B and random number operations.

However, Tajiri does not disclose a distribution device that distributes the mastery information according to mastery status information, wherein the mastery status information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device. In particular, Tajiri discloses a game device A (alleged terminal apparatus) that receives an ID data from game device B (alleged distribution device). The processor of the game device A processes the received ID data and other random numbers to generate a helping data (Abstract and column 22, lines 2-10).

Therefore, Tajiri at most discloses a game system in which an alleged terminal device receives ID data from an alleged distribution device and the alleged terminal device generating

the helping data by itself. However, this does not disclose a game device B (alleged distribution device) that **distributes the mastery information** according to mastery status information, which is obtained from the game device A (alleged terminal apparatus), wherein the mastery status information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device, and indicates for a player individually.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that it would not have been obvious to combine the teachings of Onda with the teachings of Tajiri at least because Tajiri teaches receiving ID data from various other devices and generating the helping data by the processor of the recipient device while Onda teaches storing the associated data (helping data) in a central distribution device and obtaining the associated data when certain conditions are met.

Applicant submits that Stamper does not remedy the basic deficiencies in Onda and Tajiri with respect to the invention, as now claimed and as identified above, and therefore, claim 2 is allowable for at least the reasons given above.

Claim 4, 17, 18, 23 and 24

Applicant submits that since claims 4, 17, 18, 23 and 24 recite subject matter analogous to claims 2, and since Lee does not cure the deficiency noted above with respect to claim 2, these claims are also allowable at least for similar reasons claim 2 is allowable.

Claims 26, 28, 30 and 21

With regard to claims 26-31, Applicant submits that the Examiner does not give weight to the portion of the claims 26-31 that recites that the input section is operated by the player **whenever** the player wishes to obtain mastery support information, and the processor causes the

game mastery support apparatus to distribute the mastery support information when the input section is operated by the player.

Applicant submits that in Onda, the player can access the associated data, including the hints of the game progress, only when the player satisfies the game condition which comprises a result condition that a predetermined result is achieved (cf., Col. 6, Lines 42, 43 and 51-55; Col. 9, Lines 43 and 44; and Col. 10, Lines 6-8), which is significantly different from the feature recited in claims 26-31 that allows the player to operate the input section and obtain mastery support information, **whenever** the player wishes to obtain master support information.

In the Examiner interview conducted on August 8, 2007, the Examiner argued that Onda discloses that users can gain access to the fame-specific data from the distribution devices whenever they wanted, once they received the access-specific data (password). In particular, the users cannot gain access to the game-specific data until they received the password. However, according to the claimed invention, a player can obtain the mastery support information whenever the player wishes even right after the initiation of the game. Thus, the Applicant submits that claims 26-31 are allowable at least for the reasons given above.

#### Dependent claims

Applicant submits that claims that depend from the above independent claims should be patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Furthermore, claims 5, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16 and 20 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency, and because Lee does not cure the deficiencies of the rejections of those independent claims.

***Conclusion***

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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